

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A computer system for presenting a plurality of items of multiple types to a user, the system comprising:

a universal data store containing said plurality of items stored in accordance with a universal data schema, wherein at least a portion of the items contain metadata defining visual elements ~~a visual representation of at least one of said plurality of items~~ and defining ~~a plurality of~~ user-selectable tasks; and

a shell for presenting said plurality of items in the universal data store to a user, wherein the shell is configured to present a set of items ~~an item~~ containing said metadata to the user with said a visual representation and with a menu of said an ~~indication of said plurality of~~ user-selectable tasks defined by said metadata ~~contained in said item~~ and further configured to present ~~the~~ items without said corresponding metadata to the user in accordance with a default display view, wherein said shell is further configured to launch at least one application in response to a user input selecting one or more of ~~said plurality of~~ said user-selectable tasks from said menu, wherein said visual representation is generated by selecting a portion of said visual elements from the metadata accompanying multiple items from said set of items, wherein said menu is generated by selecting a portion of said user-selectable tasks from the metadata accompanying multiple items from said set of items.

2. (original) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein said universal data schema includes one or more declared properties.

3. (original) The computer system of Claim 2, wherein each of said plurality of items includes declarations associated with said one or more declared properties.

4. (original) The computer system of Claim 2, wherein said shell utilizes said one or more declared properties to present the items without said corresponding metadata in accordance with said default display view.

5. (original) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein said metadata includes item decoration data.

6. (original) The computer system of Claim 5, wherein said item decoration data identifies a subset of said metadata containing high value data.

7. (original) The computer system of Claim 6, wherein said high value data is associated with information to be displayed to a user.

8. (original) The computer system of Claim 5, wherein said item decoration data includes data indicating a format aspect associated with presentment of said metadata to a user.

9. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 8, wherein said format aspect is selected from the group consisting of data formatting, sort order, icon formatting, and associated controls.

10. (original) The computer system of Claim 8, wherein said format aspect includes one or more verbs, said verbs being associated with operations to be performed on selected items.

11. (original) The computer system of Claim 10, wherein said operations are performed by one or more applications launched to perform said verbs with respect to said selected items.

12. (original) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein said shell is further configured to present a set of items selected from said plurality of items according to a shell decoration view.

13. (original) The computer system of Claim 12, wherein said set of items includes one or more items having metadata stored in accordance with a first item decoration schema and further includes one or more items having metadata stored in accordance with a second item decoration schema.

14. (original) The computer system of Claim 12, wherein said shell decoration view includes one or more display aspects appropriate for displaying each of said set of items to a user.

15. (original) The computer system of Claim 14, wherein each of said set of items include a common characteristic.

16. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 15, wherein said common characteristic is selected from the group consisting of document file, image file, audio file, and video file.

17. (original) The computer system of Claim 12, wherein said one or more of said set of items are associated with an item decoration view that conflicts with said shell decoration view.

18. (original) The computer system of Claim 12, wherein said shell is further configured to present one or more of said set of items with decorative elements associated with an item decoration view and wherein said decorative elements do not conflict with said shell decoration view.

19. (original) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein said shell is further configured to present items selected from said plurality of items according to an explorer display view.

20. (original) The computer system of Claim 19, wherein said explorer display view includes one or more decorative properties.

21. (original) The computer system of Claim 19, wherein said explorer display view includes one or more shell display views, and wherein one of said shell display views is utilized to display a set of explorer items.

22. (original) The computer system of Claim 21, wherein said shell display view includes one or more display aspects appropriate for displaying each of said set of explorer items to a user.

23. (original) The computer system of Claim 22, wherein each of said set of explorer items include a common characteristic.

24. (original) The computer system of Claim 21, wherein said explorer display view is configured to utilize a shell display view not included with an explorer to display an item which cannot be displayed according to said one or more shell display views included with said explorer display view.

25. (original) The computer system of Claim 21, wherein said explorer display view is configured to display an explorer item which is not associated with a shell display view according to an item decoration view.

26. (original) The computer system of Claim 21, wherein said explorer display view is configured to display an explorer item which is not associated with an item decoration view according to said default display view.

27. (original) The computer system of Claim 19, wherein said explorer display view includes one or more data queries associated with said explorer display view.

28. (original) The computer system of Claim 19, wherein said explorer display view includes one or more verbs, said verbs being associated with an operation to be performed on a selected explorer item.

29. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 28, wherein said operation is performed by an application launched to perform at least one of said one or more verbs with respect to said selected explorer item.

30. (currently amended) A computer-implemented method for presenting a plurality of items stored in a universal data store to a user, the method comprising:

accessing said universal data store in response to a request to present ~~one or more of said~~ plurality of items to the user, wherein said plurality of items are stored in accordance with a universal data schema, and wherein at least a portion of said plurality of items contain metadata stored in accordance with an item decoration schema, wherein said metadata defines a visual representation of an item and further defines a plurality of user-selectable tasks that may be performed with respect to said item;

for at least a portion of ~~said one or more requested items~~, accessing said metadata contained in multiple of said one or more requested items ~~a requested item to obtain said visual representation of said requested item and to obtain~~ to select tasks from said plurality of user-selectable tasks stored in said metadata;

automatically presenting along with the one or more requested items a menu containing at least a portion of the selected tasks obtained from said multiple of said one or more items ~~said one or more requested items to the user with said visual representation and with an indication of said plurality of user-selectable tasks defined by said metadata;~~

receiving a user input selecting one of said plurality of user-selectable tasks from said menu;

launching at least one application in response to said user input; and

directing said at least one application to perform the selected user-selectable task with respect to said one or more requested items.

31. (original) The method of Claim 30, wherein said metadata includes data indicating one or more decorative aspects associated with presentment of said metadata to a user.

32. (original) The method of Claim 31, wherein presenting a requested item with said corresponding metadata includes presenting said metadata according to one or more of said decorative aspects.

33. (original) The method of Claim 30, wherein said method further comprises presenting a set of items according to a shell decoration view, wherein said set of items includes one or more items having metadata stored in accordance with a first item decoration schema and further includes one or more items having metadata stored in accordance with a second item decoration schema.

34. (original) The method of Claim 33, wherein said shell decoration view includes one or more display aspects appropriate for displaying each of said set of items to a user.

35. (previously presented) The method of Claim 33, wherein presenting said set of items according to a shell decoration view includes presenting items having an item decoration schema which conflicts with said shell decoration view according to said shell decoration view.

36. (original) The method of Claim 30, wherein said method further comprises presenting items according to an explorer display view.

37. (original) The method of Claim 36, wherein said explorer display view includes one or more decorative properties and one or more shell display views, and wherein one or more of said shell display views are utilized to display a set of explorer items.

38. (original) The method of Claim 37, wherein an item which cannot be displayed according to said one or more shell display views included with said explorer display view is presented according to a shell display view not included with said explorer display view.

39. (original) The method of Claim 37, wherein an item which cannot be displayed according to a shell display view is presented according to an item decoration view.

40. (original) The method of Claim 36, wherein said explorer display view includes one or more verbs, said verbs being associated with an operation to be performed on a selected explorer item.

41. (currently amended) A shell embodied on one or more computer-readable media and executable on a computer for presenting a plurality of items stored in a universal data store to a user, the shell comprising:

a data store interaction component which retrieves metadata contained within one or more of said plurality of items in response to a request to present the one or more items to the user, wherein said plurality of items are stored in accordance with a universal data schema, and wherein at least a portion of said plurality of items contain



said metadata defining visual elements ~~a visual representation of at least one of said plurality of items~~ and defining a ~~plurality of~~ user-selectable tasks;

a display presentation component which utilizes said retrieved metadata to present ~~a display view of at least a portion of said one or more requested items~~, wherein said display presentation component is configured to present a set of items of heterogeneous types ~~a requested item containing said metadata~~ to the user with said a visual representation and with a menu of said ~~an indication of said plurality of~~ user-selectable tasks defined by said metadata ~~contained in said requested item~~ and further configured to present a set of items of a homogenous-type ~~a requested item without said corresponding metadata~~ in accordance with a default display view associated with said homogenous-type, wherein said display presentation component is further configured to launch at least one application in response to a user input selecting one or more of said ~~plurality of~~ user-selectable tasks from said menu, wherein said visual representation is generated by selecting a portion of said visual elements from the metadata accompanying multiple items from said set of items of heterogeneous types, wherein said menu is generated by selecting a portion of said user-selectable tasks from the metadata accompanying multiple items from said set of items of heterogeneous types.